

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, March 15. 1707.

I Have been observing the Concurrence of Circumstances in the mighty Work of the Union, and how Providence had seem'd to have been preparing the World a long Time before for this great Event.

I instanc'd in the present Complexion of the Parliament, the wonderful Turns, Returns, and Convulsions of Affairs in this Nation, before such a Parliament as this could be obtain'd; and indeed it is a most remarkable thing, and I know not how to quit the Subject; Providence seems to have *sat brooding* on the great Mass of Causes to hatch this Event, and I cannot but observe it.

But I come to another Point in the Union, and that is the Temper of the People—— Nor can I say, there ever was that Minute, in the whole Circle of Time before, when the People could be said to be temper'd for

this Work, as they were now— Nothing so great, nothing so valuable now, but they would give it up to the *Scots* on reasonable Conditions; nothing so weak, nothing so trifling before, but it was to be insisted on against them—If they traded with *France*, *tho' at the same time we agree the Dutch may*, yet the *Scots* must not, and we must fit out Fleets to intercept their Commerce; if they would not name the same King or Successor with us, we were for making them do it, and going to work the *shortest Way* with them, and yet we own'd at the same time their Independent Right; if they hang'd a Brood of Pyrates on a Testimony they thought sufficient, we were for enquiring into the Justice of their Proceedings, and making a National Quarrel of it; nay, and such was our Warmth, that till this Paper put them a little in Mind, when and how,

how, they had done worse things at home in the *Cornishes, Ruffels, Colleges, &c.* of the last Age, it was not safe for a *Scots Man* to walk the Streets.

What now has chang'd the National Temper? What has brought us to covet a general Union, a Coalition of Interests, laying open our pretended Mines of Trade to the *Scots*, and taking them in as a Part of our selves, it must be *Digitus Dei!* What could master radicated Prejudices? What could reduce refractory and direct Contraries? The supreme Power must be in all this; it could not be, as a certain noble Man has observ'd; *Authority may excite that Will, but cannot operate upon the Understanding*; is must be ascrib'd to invisible and inscrutable Providence!

I cannot but observe the noble Lord, I hinted at in a late famous Speech made to the People, to the Peers, I should say, and had he not printed it, I would have said so, tells us, the Union is made up of a great many mismatch'd Pieces, and of jarring incongruous Ingredients—— Shall I take the Freedom to tell his Lordship, herein lies the Beauty, the Harmony, and admirable Contexture of the Work; that as the glorious Creation and the Harmony of its Order is produc'd from the Connection between the most different and incongruous Elements, so the Contexture of the Union is still the more amazing, by how much the more it is produced from such incongruous Ingredients. This is the Excellence and wonderful Perfection of Divine Operation, viz. Its bringing Contraries, not only to illustrate, but to support and subsist one another.

Never was any thing so a Prodigy of Providence! Every Step taken against it, lifted

it forward; Rabbles and Tumults rais'd to scare it, quicken'd it; Banter and Jest on one side, made the other serious and steady; every Extreme mov'd towards it as an Engine, in which the Wheels have contrary Motions, and yet all tend to carry on the main Design of the whole.

But nothing has been more visible in the remarkable Circumstance, than the mighty Assistance it has receiv'd from the very Party, that have set themselves in order of Battle against it—— The Cabals, the Junctos, the Rabbles, the Tumults, the very Arguments rais'd against it, have concurr'd to the mighty Work.

The *Jacobites* exciting the People to appear against it, has open'd the Eyes of others to guess, whether they were going by the Character of those that went before. 'Tis plain enough for any body to guess, where they must follow, when once they know who leads.

When Scruples and pretended Prejudices were rais'd; When Oaths, Covenants and Addresses appear'd; What was the Event, but to open the Eyes of the People to search into, and consequently see the Insufficiency of those very Prejudices, they themselves had rais'd?

He must be blind to a Judgment, that cannot see the secret directing Hand of a supreme Power in this strange Agreement of Contrarieties; and give me leave here to quote a few Lines on this Head, though they are my own, not so much for the sake of the Lines, as of telling you they were wrote 3 Year ago, before this last Treaty was begun; whether Prophetick or no, I leave to others, but sure, they hit this Purpose exactly.

*When Parties join to urge the Nations Fate,
Their very Fury does their Aims defeat;
Silent they stand in envious Whispers curse,
And as they rise in Rage, decay in Force.*

*Scotland rejects our Settlement and Crown,
That two vast Nations may Unite in One;
And all the threatening Clouds of Northern Night,
Serve but to make that Union shine more bright.*

While

*The Thoughts of Border War, as they encrease,
Serve but to prompt our wiser Heads to Peace,
And all the Men of Speeches and Intrigue,
While they inflame, the Nations press the League.*

Jure Divino, Lib. 12. Fol. 21.

MISCELLANEA.

THO' the Affairs of *Britain* are full of Varieties and diverting Subjects, yet I cannot satisfy my self to quit my frequent Instances just at this Juncture, especially about the employing, settling and providing for the Poor, under the Pretence of which so many Projects, Schemes and destructive Notions to our Trade in particular, are going up and down in the World.

I have, in the last Paper I mention'd, insisted on an Expedient between the Extreme I find fault with, and my Opinion; and that is, that if these People must be thus set on Work, it may be done in Manufactures not yet wrought hereabout, which our Poor have not been yet employ'd in, and for which our Manufactures are not exchange'd; and to let them see this is not impracticable, I propos'd the Manufacture of Callicoe.

I have been challeng'd with this, as putting the People on what they cannot do; I could be very peevish with the Author of that Objection, if it were worth while. *Cannot do it, Sir? Pray, why not do it, as well as the barbarous Nations of Persia, India and China?* There is no Question, but we can be taught, and as most of the Work-houses are full of Children, they may be taught, Youth and Necessity will attain to any thing that is practicable; 'tis a Scandal to our Nation, pretending at the same time to be general Improvers of Art, not to be able to do, what is arriv'd to such Perfection in other Countries, less polite, less industrious, and less improving, than we pretend to— There's no Question, but it is to be done.

But another Politick Person tells me, it cannot be done to Advantage, and he quotes my own Words upon me, wherein I say, that, *speaking of Trade*, a Man may be said

not to be able to do, what he cannot do to Advantage.

I own this too, but then I must enquire, why it may not be done to Advantage; and the only Answer can be given to that, or that indeed is pretended to be given to it, is this, that it cannot be done so cheap, as they may be imported. To this I answer,

All Manufactures must have a Beginning, and in the Infancy of things, the Government must assist; National Benefits should have National Support, and there are several Ways to do that in this Case, particularly encouraging the Work-houses, where the Children are bred up to this Work by publick Bounties, and Allowances to every Pound of Cotton spun and wrought into Callicoe or Mullin, and by laying yet a higher Duty on the Importation of the same Goods from abroad.

Or by obliging every Parish or every Hospital, where publick Works are by Authority set up, to work such a Quantity of Cotton into Callicoes or Muslins, in proportion to the Quantity of Work they do, or Number of Hands they employ.

Let either of these Methods be try'd, and we shall soon see an End of this scoundrel Objection, that we cannot perform it— National Encouragement will at any time prompt National Industry, and both together cannot fail to do the thing to Purpose.

But to remove the Doubt, I take it upon me to say, it has been try'd, and it appears, that this Manufacture not only can be, but has been made in *England* very well, good and fine; both the Materials will perform, and the Hands will perform, and small Encouragements will add the rest, and upon this Assurance, of which I have seen the Demonstration